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## SOCIETY AFFAIRS

### THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ELECTROLYSIS

The American Committee on Electrolysis was organized at the invitation of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers to study the subject of electrolysis through the coöperation of committees representing the American Electric Railway Association, American Gas Institute, American Railway Engineering Association, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, American Water Works Association, United States Bureau of Standards, National Electric Light Association, Natural Gas Association and the Institute itself. The committee held its first meeting in May, 1913; and in its work since then the American Water Works Association has been represented by A. D. Flinn, D. D. Jackson and E. E. Minor. It has recently printed for submission to the bodies represented in its membership a 153-page preliminary report. This document, while printed, is not published and consequently cannot be used in legal proceedings. Any member of the bodies represented on the committee can obtain copies of the report from the secretary of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, 25 West 39th Street, New York, at \$1 per copy.

The report opens with definitions of the technical terms relating to electrolysis and an explanation of the electro-chemical principles involved. The method of making electrical surveys of railways, systems of pipes, underground cables, bridges and buildings is stated, the instruments used are described, and the character of the records that should be kept is explained. There are sections on American and European practice in treating electrolysis problems, a bibliography, and tables of the current flow in cast iron pipe of different diameters for 1 millivolt drop per foot of continuous pipe. The committee says the report is intended only as a statement of facts, without any conclusions drawn from the facts, discussions of legal questions, or recommendations.

## MINNESOTA SECTION

The Minnesota Section of the American Water Works Association was organized at a meeting held at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, on December 2, 1916. The attendance was 31. The temporary chairman, W. R. Young, explained the purposes of the association and the advantage of sectional meetings to bring together men interested in water works in the same district more frequently than once a year at the association's annual convention. The resident trustee of the association, F. W. Cappelen, requested the Section for instructions as to his vote upon the proposed separation of the editorial work connected with the association's publications from the secretarial work of the association. After discussion, the Section voted in favor of this separation. The chair appointed J. A. Jensen, Joseph Seibert and John Wilson as a nominating committee, which reported the following nominations: Chairman, F. W. Cappelen; vice-chairman, G. O. House; treasurer, W. R. Young; trustees, T. C. Gordon for three years, Wm. Todd for two years and D. A. Reed for one year. They were unanimously elected, and at a subsequent meeting elected H. A. Whittaker, secretary. The constitution and by-laws of the Section were printed in the JOURNAL for September, 1916, and provide for one annual meeting of the Section. After discussion it was voted to hold at least one more meeting annually, the time and place to be selected by the officers.

The following papers were presented: "Some Problems of the Water Works Executive," by G. O. House; "The Fallacy of Extending Service Connections to the Curb Line Previous to Paving," by John Wilson; "State Supervision of Public Water Supplies in Minnesota," by H. A. Whittaker.

## NEW YORK SECTION.

A meeting of the New York Section was held at the Hotel Astor on December 20, 1916, with Allen Hazen in the chair.

The first speaker was J. H. Purdy, who explained the purpose of the Pennsylvania Water Works Association of which he is president. It was organized about twenty years ago to meet the danger of municipal competition then threatening private water companies, which alone form its membership. The organization undertook, first, to secure interpretation of the law which would prevent the

loss of the capital invested in privately owned plants through the unrestrained competition of public or municipal plants, and its influence was felt in the legal proceedings to secure justice for the investor and fair play for the private company. Second, it undertook to inform its members of the law and decisions made in securing for private companies a fair consideration of the value of their properties when municipalities sought to purchase them. As a result of this coöperative work through the association, the private water companies in Pennsylvania are free from municipal competition but can be taken over, under the law, by the municipalities they serve. The Pennsylvania Water Works Association was a pioneer advocate of the fundamental principles that have been adopted as a basis of a part of the rulings of most public service commissions established to regulate public utilities, the principal being that a regulated utility, which is a natural monopoly, should not be subject to competition so long as it performs its duties to the public satisfactorily. For example, in Wisconsin, if any privately owned utility would surrender its own charter and take out an indeterminate permit to do business, the municipality served can only take over the plant, if municipal ownership is desired, on the basis of a fair appraisal of the property. It cannot build a competing plant. That is one of the principles for which the Pennsylvania Water Works Association struggled hard, and the legal condition of private companies in the Commonwealth is now probably as good as in any other state.

The second speaker was Prof. Albert F. Ganz, professor of electrical engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology, who spoke informally with the aid of lantern slides on "Electrolysis." Those taking part in the subsequent discussion were H. V. Allen, D. F. Atkins, Edward S. Cole, D. W. French, Professor Ganz, Nicholas S. Hill, Prof. D. D. Jackson, F. T. Kemble, Henry B. Machen, Fred B. Nelson, Alexander Potter, and Hermann Rosentreter.

#### OBITUARY

James J. Campbell, Menominee, Michigan, died October 26, 1915.

Edward L. Peene, Yonkers, New York, died December 31, 1916.

R. E. Speakman, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada, died January 12, 1917.

## NEW MEMBERS, ACTIVE

Robert M. Anderson, Stevens Institute, Hoboken, New Jersey.  
Robert W. Angus, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

A. N. Bennett, Illinois State Water Survey, Urbana, Ill.  
Madeince Bixby, Illinois State Water Survey, Urbana, Ill.  
Horace J. Cook, Kennebec Water District, Waterville, Me.  
T. R. Cook, Water Commissioner, Toledo, Ohio.  
Waldo S. Coulter, Consulting Engineer, 2 Rector Street, New York City, N. Y.  
George B. Dusenberre, Water Commissioner, Cleveland, Ohio.  
George W. Graff, Chemist, Filtration Plant, Kingston, New York.  
Edman Greenfield, Illinois State Water Supply, Urbana, Ill.  
William Durrell Hatfield, Illinois State Water Supply, Urbana, Ill.  
Mentor Hetzer, Manager Water Company, Moundsville, West Virginia.  
C. R. Holley, Superintendent Water Works, Bessemer, Michigan.  
Harry Neville Jenks, Sanitary Engineer, Burma, India.  
S. D. Kirkpatrick, Illinois State Water Survey, Urbana, Ill.  
George D. Mackie, City Engineer, Moose Jaw, Sask., Canada.  
Friend Lee Mickle, Illinois State Water Survey, Urbana, Ill.  
August G. Nolte, Superintendent Filter Plant, St. Louis, Mo.  
George Edward Rodman, Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity, New York City.  
J. F. Schnellbach, Illinois State Water Survey, Urbana, Ill.  
E. G. Wagner, Superintendent Water Works, Lewiston, Idaho.

## NEW MEMBER, ASSOCIATE

R. U. V. Company, Water Sterilization, New York City, N. Y.

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Members are requested to notify the Secretary promptly of any change in address.